
5th UN-REDD Regional Lessons Learned Workshop

UN-REDD
PROGRAMME



Forest Reference (Emission) Levels (FRELs) for REDD+: Presentation 1

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Module Outline

- What are Forest Reference (Emission) Levels (FRELs)?
 - Relationship to NFMS and GHG reporting
- UNFCCC Methodological Guidance for FRELs
- FREL considerations;
 - 1) Forest definition
 - 2) Scope
 - 3) Scale
 - 4) Data and Methodologies
- FRELs and National Circumstances
- Submission and technical assessment of FRELs by UNFCCC



Module Objectives

- By the end of this module, you should be able to:
 - Understand what a FREL is
 - Understand the key UNFCCC decisions on FRELs
 - Be aware of FREL considerations of forest definition, scope, scale, data and methodologies
 - Understand the relationship between FRELs, NFMS and GHG reporting
 - Understand the process of submission and assessment of FRELs under the UNFCCC, and the context of Biennial Update Reports (BURs)
 - Understand the interaction between FREL and National Circumstances



Module Design

- The Module has been divided into 2 presentations which will be presented in two presentations
 - Presentation 1 to explain what a FREL is, relevant UNFCCC decisions, and its relationship to NFMS and MRV
 - Presentation 2 to explain the FREL methodological considerations of forest definition, scope, scale, data and methodologies. To explain the concept of National Circumstances in relation to FREL, and to understand the process of submission and assessment of FRELs under the UNFCCC, and the context of BURs
- A 30 minute collaborative exercise will follow Presentation 1 and will re-enforce the lecture material
- A 60 minute collaborative group exercise after presentation 2 will apply learned concepts



Presentation 1

Focus on

- Developing a basic understanding of what a FREL is
- Understanding the key UNFCCC decisions on FRELs
- Understanding the relationship between FRELs, NFMS and GHG reporting



What is a Forest Reference (Emission) Level (FREL)?

Forest Reference Emission Level (FREL) for REDD+

The 4 Elements of REDD+; Cancun Agreement



REDD+ “Forest Reference Emission Level and Forest Reference Levels” – what does it mean?

- REDD+ has defined FREL/FRLs as “benchmarks for assessing each country’s performance in implementing REDD+ activities”
- UNFCCC has never defined the two concepts... The UN-REDD interpretation;

Forest Reference Emission Level (FREL)

Gross emissions from deforestation or degradation

Solely for activities that “**reduce emissions**”

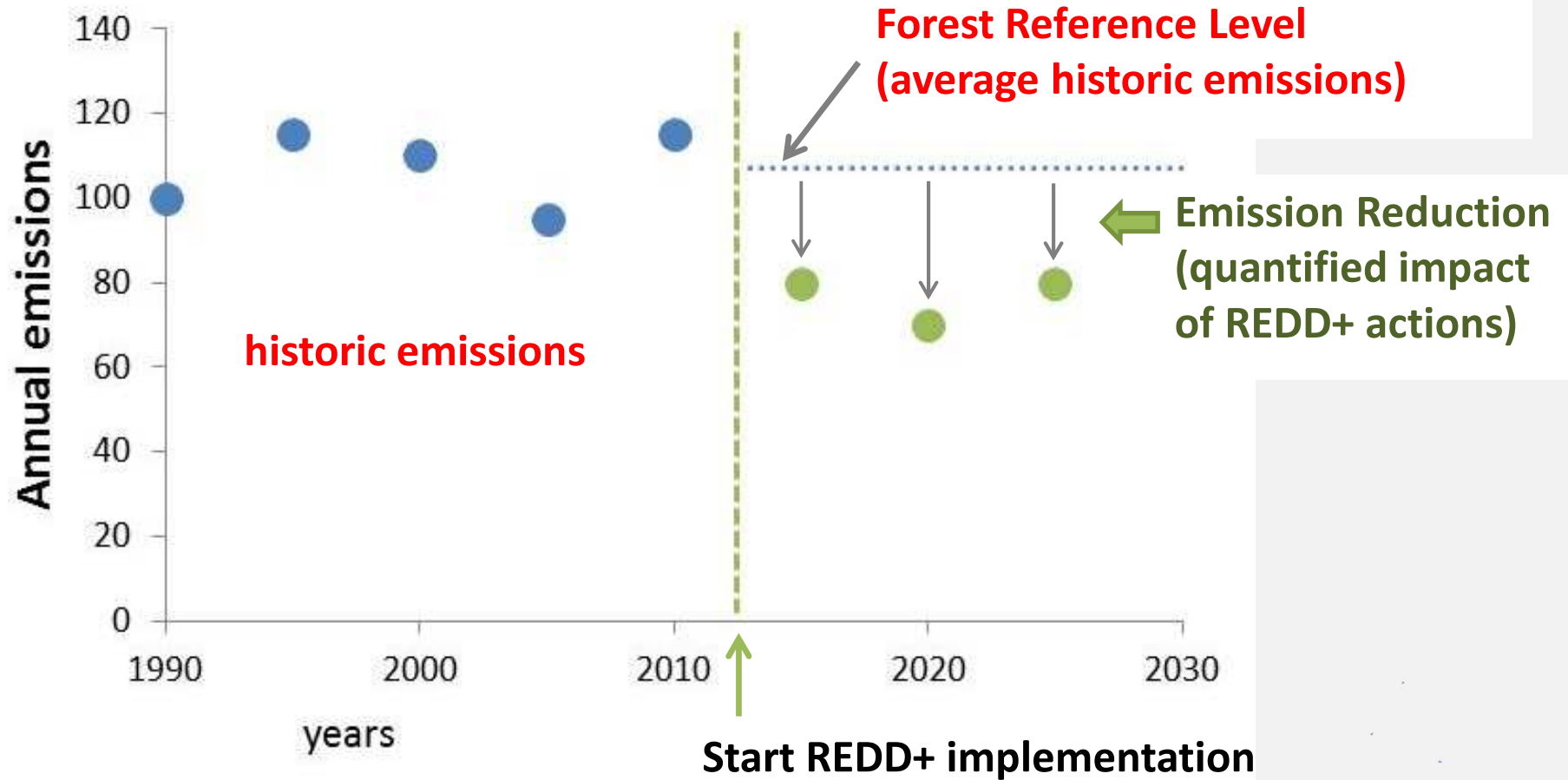
- Reducing emissions from deforestation
- Reducing emissions from forest degradation

Forest Reference Level (FRL)

Net emissions and removals

Also includes activities from the “+” that can “**enhance forest carbon stocks**”

FREL/FRL graphical example



Relationship NFMS, MRV and FREL/FRLs

Decision 11/CP.19 (Modalities for NFMS)

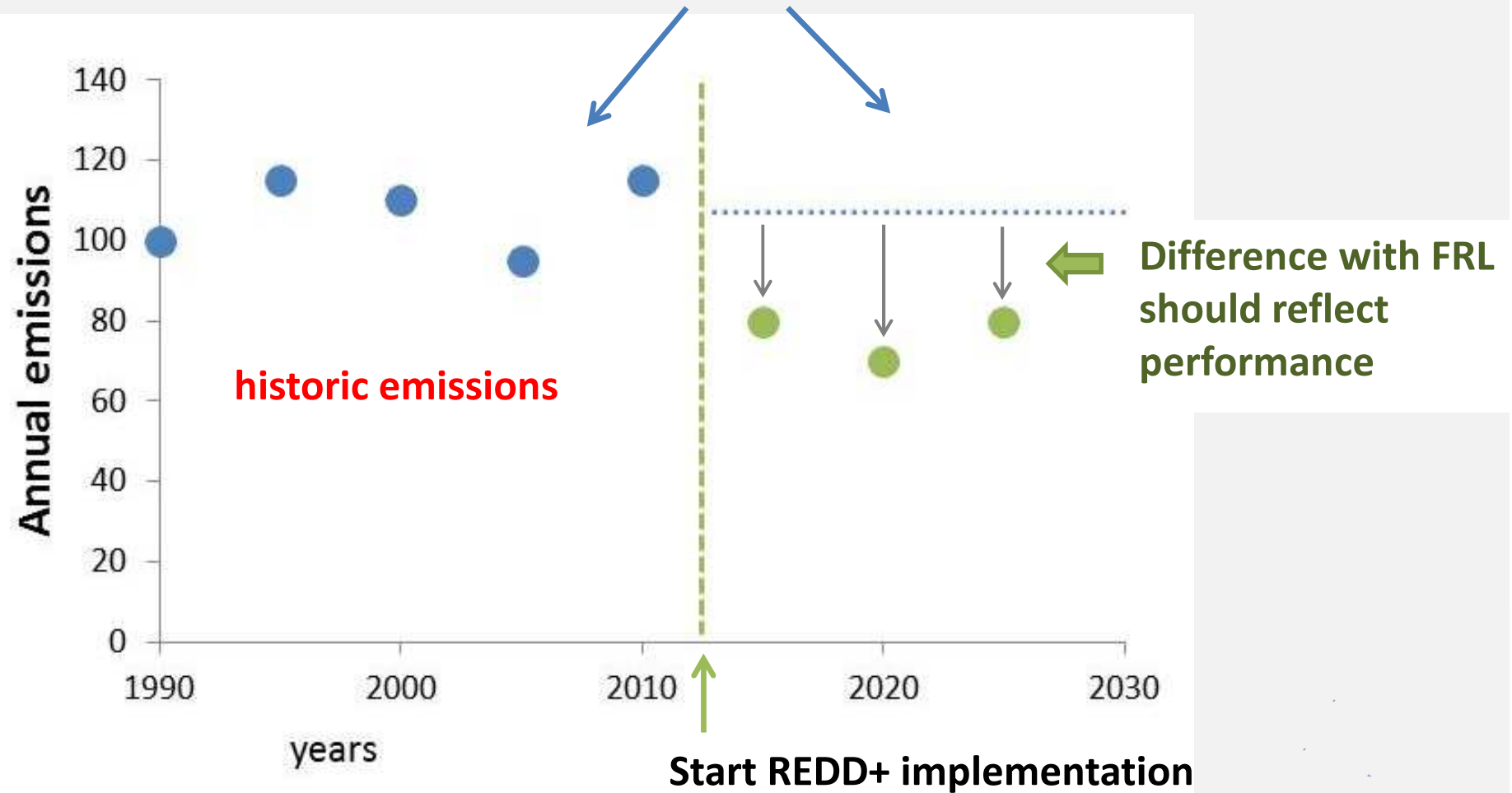
- NFMS should provide data and information suitable for MRV...

Decision 14/CP.19 (Modalities for MRV)

- MRV should maintain consistency with FREL/FRL
- Results of REDD+ implementation should maintain consistency with FREL/FRL (such that performance can be measured against FREL/FRL)



MRV: consistency in methodologies, definitions and comprehensiveness over time



Relationship NFMS, FREL/FRLs and GHG-I

Decision 11/CP.19 (Modalities for NFMS)

- NFMS should provide data and information suitable for MRV...

Decision 12/CP.17 (Modalities for FREL/FRL)

- FREL/FRLs should maintain consistency with emissions and removals contained in GHG inventory



UNFCCC Methodological Guidance for FREL/FRL

Forest Reference Emission Levels (FREL) for REDD+

UNFCCC: 4 decisions related to FREL/FRLs

- Decision 4/CP 15** “...transparently taking into account **historic data**, and adjust for **national circumstances**...”
- Decision 1/CP 16** FREL/FRLs one of the 4 REDD+ elements
- Decision 12/CP 17** ‘**Construction** guidelines’ (Modalities for FREL/FRL)
Information guidelines (for FREL/FRL submission)
- Decision 13/CP 19** Guidelines **technical assessment**
Procedure technical assessment (timing etc)

Decision 4/CP.15

Recognizes that... in establishing FRL/FREL should do so **transparently** taking into account **historic data**, and adjust for **national circumstances**

Decision 1/CP.16, para 71

Request countries aiming to undertake REDD+ to develop:

(d) A national forest reference emission level and/or forest reference level or, if appropriate, **as an interim measure, subnational**



Decision 12/CP.17

Modalities for FREL/FRLs

..expressed in **tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent CO₂ eq per year** are **benchmarks** for assessing each country's **performance** in implementing REDD+ activities ...

..shall be established maintaining **consistency** with anthropogenic forest-related greenhouse gas emissions by sources and removals by sinks as contained in each country's **GHGs inventories**

..a **step-wise approach** to national FRL/FREL development may be useful, enabling Parties to **improve FRL/FREL** by incorporating **better data, improved methodologies** and, where appropriate, **additional pools**...

..**subnational FRL/FREL** may be elaborated as an **interim** measure, while transitioning to a national...

...**update a FRL/FREL periodically** as appropriate, taking into account new knowledge, new trends and any modification of scope and methodologies...



What the UNFCCC has not provided:

- No guidance on:
 - **Reference period** for historic data used to develop the FREL/FRL;
 - **Monitoring requirements** – e.g. how often required;
 - Level of **emission factors**;
 - Whether **spatially explicit data** is required;
 - **Uncertainty** and/or **accuracy** threshold required;
 - What circumstances that **adjust** FREL/FRLs are acceptable;
 - What “subnational” means, i.e. what **scale** is acceptable?



Decision 12/CP.17 Annex

Guidelines for submission of **information** FREL/FRL

Information used to construct FREL/FRL including **historical data**

Methodological information, including, as appropriate, a description of **data sets, approaches, models, if applicable and assumptions used, descriptions of relevant policies/plans**

Scope: Pools, gases and activities included in the FREL/FRL (and reasons for any omissions, noting that significant activities/pools should not be excluded)

Definition of forest used (and explanation if different than that used in the GHG inventory and other international reporting)



Decision 12/CP.17 Annex

Guidelines for submission of **information** FREL/FRL

Information, including methodological information, included in FREL/FRL submissions should be:

- **Transparent**
- **Complete** (meaning the provision of information allows for the reconstruction of the FREL/FRL)
- **Consistent**
- **Accurate**



Decision 13/CP.19

Guidelines for technical assessment FREL/FRLs

...each submission referred to in decision 12/CP.17, p13, (FRL/FREL) shall be subject to a **technical assessment**

.. In accordance with 12/CP.17... on a **voluntary basis** and when deemed appropriate, **submit its FRL/FREL..**

.. might be technically assessed in the context of **results-based payments...**



Decision 13/CP.19 Annex

Guidelines for technical assessment FREL/FRLs

Objectives

- a) Assess the degree to which information provided is in accordance with the information guidelines
- b) Offer a facilitative, non-intrusive, technical exchange on information on the construction of FREL/FRLs....with a view to supporting the capacity of developing country Parties



Decision 13/CP.19 Annex

Guidelines for technical assessment FREL/FRLs

- a) Extent to which **consistency with GHG-I** is maintained
- b) How **historical data** have been taken into account
- c) Extent to which **information** was **transparent, complete, consistent** and **accurate**
- c) **Scale**: What area the FREL/FRL covers
- d) Whether a description of **relevant policies and plans** have been provided, as appropriate
- e) If applicable, changes from previous submissions



Decision 13/CP.19 Annex

Guidelines for technical assessment FREL/FRLs

- f) **Scope:** pools, gases and activities included, and **justification** of why omitted pools and/or activities **were deemed not significant**
- g) Whether the **definition of forest** has been provided and, if different from GHG-I or international reporting, why and how it differs
- h) Whether assumptions about **future changes to domestic policies** have been included in FREL/FRL construction
- i) Extent to which FREL/FRL is consistent with information provided



Brazil's submission to the UNFCCC

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a) Information used in constructing the FREL

Activity data: Landsat data (PRODES)

Emission factors: Emission Factors from carbon map

Assumptions: Biomass after conversion is zero

b) Transparent, complete, consistent and accurate information

Complete & Transparent: Links to GIS data, carbon map, etc.

Consistent: Demonstrate time series consistency and consistency with 2nd national GHG inventory

Accurate: Discussion on uncertainties of the data



c) Pools and gases included in the FREL

Provides explanation of why only CO₂ included; plus choice of pools

d) Definition of forest used

>.5 ha, >5m height, >10% canopy cover

Assessment of Brazil's FREL is underway



Summary

- Taken as a package we have a rule book for the construction of FREL/FRLs under the UNFCCC
- Some methodological elements are clearly defined, and other elements remain undefined to allow flexibility at a country implementation level



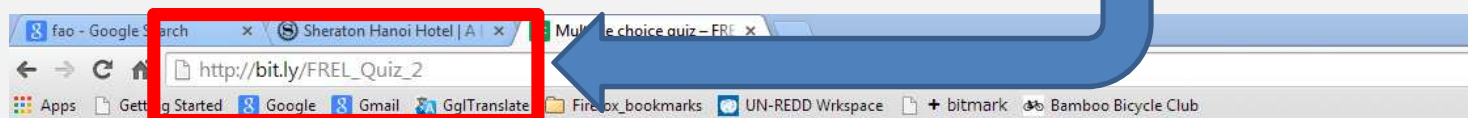
Introduction to the collaborative exercise 1 on FREL

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- Please get online, and if needed share a laptop and consider the two FREL decisions under the UNFCCC (we have some additional copies here)
- Please spend 20 minutes completing the FREL multiple choice questionnaire now online here
- We can then have a discussion on the results: note that your submissions is completely anonymous...

Please complete the form on-line
Type into web-browser: http://bit.ly/FREL_Quiz_2



Multiple choice quiz – FREL and the UNFCCC. The Warsaw Framework for REDD+. Decision 12/CP.17 part II.

With reference to the text for Decision 12/CP.17 part II (Modalities for forest reference emission levels and forest reference levels) answer the following questions (complete the exercise individually then compare your answers with your neighbor)

*Required

1) A Forest Reference Emission Level (FREL) should be expressed in *

- a. Cubic meters
- b. Tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent per year
- c. Millions of dollars
- d. All of the above

2) A Forest Reference Emission Level (FREL) is *

- a. A benchmark for assessing each country's performance in implementing REDD+